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Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

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Agenda item 3 (a)
Special theme: Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples: (a) Goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals: "Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger", to be addressed under the following thematic approach of combating poverty: good practices and barriers to implementation

Draft recommendations submitted by the Rapporteur

1. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues notes that the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in connection with indigenous peoples must be viewed within the broader context of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which brings together the three basic aims of the Charter of the United Nations: peace and security, economic and social development, and human rights. Indigenous peoples have the right to benefit from the Millennium Development Goals and from other goals and aspirations contained in the Millennium Declaration to the same extent as all others. Indigenous and tribal peoples are lagging behind other parts of the population in the achievement of the goals in most, if not all, the countries in which they live, and indigenous and tribal women commonly face additional gender-based disadvantages and discrimination.

2. The Forum therefore notes with concern that indigenous issues are often absent from Millennium Development Goals and poverty reduction processes and from Millennium Development Goals reports and poverty reduction strategy papers. The Forum is concerned that, unless the particular situation of indigenous peoples are adequately taken into account, some Millennium Development Goals processes may lead to accelerated loss of lands and natural resources for indigenous peoples, and thus of their means of subsistence and their displacement, as well as to accelerated assimilation and erosion of their culture.

3. The Forum recalls the recommendations made at its first three sessions on economic and social development, as well as on indigenous children, indigenous women and the other areas of its mandate, and stresses that those recommendations are valid and important towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

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4. In connection with Millennium Development Goal 1, "Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger: reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day and reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger", the Forum wishes to draw particular attention to pertinent recommendations made at its first three sessions.[1]

5. The Forum makes the additional recommendations set out below.

Framework and capacity-building

6. In implementing the Millennium Development Goals, States should ensure the absolute prohibition of racial discrimination and, where appropriate, should promote multicultural policies, affirmative action and special measures necessary for poverty reduction among indigenous communities.

7. States, the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations should support the efforts of indigenous peoples to build, articulate and implement their visions of development. They should provide adequate funding, technical and institutional support and training to enable indigenous peoples to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and for indigenous peoples to participate effectively in the planning, design, implementation and monitoring of policies, programmes and projects.

8. States, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academia and the media should promote national dialogues, including through the establishment of institutional frameworks, as appropriate, in order to bring together indigenous peoples' perspectives and priorities for sustainable human development and their expectations regarding the Millennium Development Goals. Indigenous peoples' institutions and processes, where they exist, should be respected during these dialogues.

9. The human rights-based approach to development should be operationalized by States, the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations, including the international financial institutions, and should be the framework underpinning Millennium Development Goals and poverty reduction strategies, programmes and activities. The recognition of indigenous peoples as distinct peoples and the respect for their individual and collective human rights, rights to lands and territories and sustainable use of natural resources are crucial for achieving a just and sustainable solution to the widespread poverty in their midst. Relevant international treaties, such as International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169, common article 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which declares that "no people shall be deprived of its own means of subsistence", as well as bilateral State-indigenous treaties or accords, should be implemented to ensure compliance and implementation.

10. Member States, the United Nations system, bodies and funds should consider the definitions of extreme poverty by indigenous peoples and in this regard should refer to the report of the independent expert on human rights and extreme poverty

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2002, Supplement No. 23* (E/2002/43/Rev.1), para. 25 (f); ibid., *2003, Supplement No. 23* (E/2003/43), paras. 8 and 9, 15, 38 and 41-44; ibid., *2004, Supplement No. 23* (E/2004/43), paras. 9, 14, 57 and 58, 61, 64, 67, 69 and 70, and 72.

(E/CN.4/2005/49). Poverty indicators based on indigenous peoples' own perception of their situation and experiences should be developed, jointly with indigenous peoples.

11. Governments, the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations should develop programmes, in cooperation with indigenous peoples, to build the capacity and awareness of their staff to better understand and address indigenous issues.

Implementation and monitoring

12. The impact of the implementation of Millennium Development Goals on indigenous peoples should be assessed and reported in Millennium Development Goals country reports and other relevant reports by States and the United Nations system. Progressive assessment of the situation of indigenous peoples in the process of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals should be reflected in the Millennium Development Goals country reports. Guidelines for the preparation of the Millennium Development Goals reports should be refined to ensure that the poverty situation of indigenous peoples is integrated. The Millennium Development Goals country reports should be prepared, where relevant, with the full participation of indigenous peoples.

13. The common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework, poverty reduction strategy papers, country strategy papers and other development processes, national or international, should ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples, including indigenous women and, as relevant, indigenous children and youth.

14. The United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations and donor agencies should implement, at the country level, existing policies on indigenous peoples or develop such policies if they do not exist.

15. Governments, the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations should, within the context of the 2005 Millennium Development Goals review and beyond, develop disaggregated data and information on indigenous peoples, in partnership with indigenous peoples. This should include a budget analysis to determine the amount of resources allotted to indigenous peoples. The Forum recommends to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean that it to continue and strengthen its efforts regarding the production, elaboration and use of relevant information from population censuses, household surveys and other adequate sources, jointly with indigenous peoples, aiming at improving socio-economic conditions and active participation of indigenous peoples in the development process throughout the Latin American and the Caribbean region.

16. States, the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations should ensure the participation of indigenous peoples in designing and formulation of poverty reduction strategies as well as in the implementation and monitoring processes, and should make them visible in poverty reduction strategies, programmes and activities. Rights to indigenous land, forest and natural resources should be clearly identified in poverty reduction strategy papers documents, the role of indigenous peoples should be specified and the control by indigenous peoples

over traditional land, forest, natural resources and decisions on the type of development should be acknowledged.

17. Relations between development agencies and the organizations of indigenous peoples should be direct and not relayed through intermediate institutions of the dominant society.

18. States should recognize the rights of indigenous peoples to food security and the sustainable production and consumption of healthy and nutritious foods by using appropriate sustainable technology. There is a particular need to ensure that indigenous peoples who depend on marine and terrestrial resources be supported in protecting those resources.

19. States, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes should mobilize support for indigenous peoples who are extremely vulnerable to natural disasters.

Other follow-up

20. The Forum welcomes resolution 49/7 of the Commission of the Status of Women, entitled "Indigenous women beyond the ten-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action", adopted in March 2005, and recommends to the United Nations system and Governments to implement that resolution.

21. The Forum calls on the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to continue its support to the national indigenous peoples biodiversity participatory mechanisms of the small island developing states through the Convention's island and biodiversity project and indigenous peoples programme, in the promotion of sustainable biodiversity.

22. The Forum encourages the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to emphasize support for the responsible use of culturally appropriate agricultural inputs and technology so as to protect the traditional livelihoods, such as small-scale agriculture, shifting cultivation and pastoralism.

23. The Forum recommends that immediate steps be taken within the framework of the Commission on Sustainable Development to protect water from privatization and from bilateral and multilateral governmental agreements and other incursions that affect the integrity of waters and impoverish communities, particularly indigenous women. The Forum recommends that the Commission appoint a special rapporteur for the protection of water to gather testimony directly from indigenous communities of the world impacted by or targeted for water privatization, diversion, toxic contamination, pollution, commodification and other environmental injustices that damage natural and potable water supplies.

24. The Forum recommends the full participation of indigenous peoples at the upcoming World Water Forum to be held in Mexico City in 2006, and the inclusion of indigenous rights and perspectives on water in that conference.

25. The Forum recommends that the ILO, with the participation of interested parties, including indigenous peoples' organizations (the United Nations system, the International Finance Corporation, the European Bank for Rural Development) conduct a workshop on capacity-building for the capacity development of indigenous communities to ensure that Millennium Development Goals are implemented appropriately for indigenous peoples.

26. The Forum recommends that FAO work further on the development of cultural indicators for identifying priorities and criteria and methodologies for the right to food and food security, with the participation of indigenous peoples, taking into account the protection of indigenous peoples' traditional foods systems and livelihoods. The threats to sustaining such systems, such as monoculture cash crop production, mineral extraction, environmental contamination and genetically modified seeds and technology, should be addressed.

27. The Forum, recognizing the contributions of the International Fund for Agricultural Development and FAO in reducing rural poverty and their experience of good practices, recommends that they consider operational guidelines on indigenous peoples and a framework tool for advocacy for promoting indigenous rights and development and achieving international development goals which emerged from international conferences, summits and conventions which are relevant for indigenous peoples.

28. The Forum recommends that the precautionary principle undergirds and the regulation of the introduction of technologies, such as genetically modified crops which includes GURT, or the terminator seed technology the Biosafety Protocol of the Convention on Biological Diversity, be implemented.

29. The Forum, taking note with appreciation of the conclusions and recommendations of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights joint publication entitled "Indigenous peoples' right to adequate housing: a global overview", recommends that UN-Habitat, jointly with the Office of the High Commissioner, organize an expert group meeting in 2006 to review the status of progress on indigenous peoples' housing rights globally and identify and document best practices, and report on the outcome and recommendations of the meeting to the Forum at its sixth session.

30. The Forum calls for the dissemination and full implementation of the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur's reports on the relationships of indigenous peoples and land rights, and on permanent sovereignty of indigenous peoples over their natural resources.

31. The Forum welcomes the offer of the World Bank to host a workshop on indigenous peoples and poverty, and looks forward to receiving the results of the workshop in its fifth session.

32. The Forum urges States, the United Nations system, international financial institutions, international and regional trade bodies (such as the World Trade Organization, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and the Common Market of the South) to undertake social and human rights impact assessments of the globalization and liberalization of trade and investments on indigenous peoples' poverty situation.